
THE IMPACT OF EXPLICIT LISTENING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON THE ACADEMIC LISTENING SKILLS OF ENGINEERING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the influence of explicit strategy instruction on the academic listening skills of tertiary-level learners. Undergraduate engineering students ($N = 38$) from an intact class at a public sector university in Karachi were taken as a sample. The subjects received explicit listening strategy instruction for six weeks through online teaching. Participants' listening abilities were assessed before and after the intervention using an IELTS academic listening pre-and post-test. This quasi-experimental study focuses on the impact of teaching academic listening through explicit listening strategy instruction in the Academic English course. There are only a few quantitative research studies in the Pakistani context to investigate academic listening efficiency using explicit listening strategy instruction. The quantitative data obtained through the experiment in this study was analyzed by applying descriptive statistics and paired t-test. The result implies that listening instructions rendered explicitly could enhance the academic listening skills of tertiary-level students. The study offers implications for ESL/EFL teaching-learning contexts.

KEYWORDS

Explicit listening strategy instruction (ELSI), Academic listening skills, ESL, Strategy-based instruction, English language learners

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Pakistan, students usually learn English through a set of formal instructions from the English language teacher with only a little exposure to the language outside formal study. In such situations, their aptitude to understand spoken English may be reduced. Since academic listening is a primary medium of learning and receiving conceptual insights, it is critical. However, the least attention has been paid to enhancing academic listening skills, particularly at the tertiary level (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011, Wallace et al., 2004). The reason for not as much work on listening is probably the dynamic, multifaceted nature of academic listening, due to which the learners are barely taught about listening while using effective strategies (El-dali, 2017; Vandergrift, 2007).

The huge number of studies being carried out in the foreign context on the skill of listening highlights the fact that academic listening skills are a prerequisite for students' effective performance in their academic endeavors (Babaei, 2017; Carrier, 2003; Graham, 2011; Hadijah & Shalawati, 2016; Kummin & Rahman, 2010; Mehmood, Bukhari, Mushtaq, Akhter, Tariq, 2014; Yeldham, 2016). Academic listening is appraised as pivotal for learners' academic success considering that it places immense demand on learners' cognition, which enhances learners' cognizance (Field, 2004; Hadijah & Shalawati, 2016). The application of academic listening strategies also plays a leading role in students' academic life to achieve academic excellence (Hadijah & Shalawati, 2016; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

Students need a greater degree of listening proficiency (Goh, 2018; Jarvis et al., 2018; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2010) since participating actively in various academic discourses (Ahmadi, 2016). They are also required to participate in project work and other academic activities at the university level, which demand practical listening skills, without which they might not be able to perform better in their groups. Thus, a set of unique listening skills is a prerequisite for maximum involvement in academic activities, which may help students in a tremendous amount to showcase their ability to comprehend, infer and respond appropriately (Stepanovienè, 2012). Nevertheless, it is seen that university language teachers focus more on teaching syntax, lexis, reading, and writing in English, and there is barely any emphasis on teaching listening strategies (Abedin et al., 2010). This skill is the least taught and is rarely dignified in English language curricula and educational settings (Rodriguez, 2012). Another reason to put less effort into teaching listening is a lack of appropriate teaching resources and less intrinsic motivation (Babaei, 2017, Hamouda, 2013). Due to the broad research gap,

there is less focus on formal instructions translated into ESL learners facing barriers to improving their academic listening skills. This claim agrees with several investigative studies (Abedin et al., 2010; Akter, 2019; Kamal & Fayyaz, 2011; Kavaliauskiene, 2019), proving a problem in efficient listening of academic content should be taken into consideration.

Academic listening is now considered a skill that requires more formal teaching and systematic instruction for improvement (Goh, 2018). There is significant literature available to prove the positive impact of listening strategy instruction on L2 learners' listening performance (e.g., Carrier, 2003; Chen, 2007; Clement, 2007; Ozeki, 2000; Siegel, 2013; Graham & MacAro, 2008; Jacobsen, 2015). According to Ma & Oxford (2014), strategies for language acquisition are used by students to expand their target language skills. It also helps learners manipulate the acquired knowledge, thus subsisting their listening difficulties. Explicit listening strategy instruction has undoubtedly become an essential element of second language listening research (Graham et al., 2011; Siegel, 2013) which helps the listener's mental processes (Cross, 2009). Moreover, explicit listening strategy instruction is the motivational construct that helps learners to be involved in sensible awareness of listening to clarify the process, provides them with the freedom to choose an appropriate strategy from a range, and implementation of the learned strategies following the demand of listening task (Cross, 2009, 2015). The efficacy of explicit listening strategy instruction is significant in enhancing the learners' academic listening skills, which are proven by many experimental research studies internationally (Bagheri & Karami, 2014; Baker & Cerro, 2000; Chamot, 2021; Dergisi, 2018; Yi Guan, 2014; Zarrabi, 2016). However, less number of research studies have been conducted on a similar subject locally.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic listening is an essential dimension of L2 listening research, owing to the increasing number of students who acquire their education in English (Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2010). According to research, listening is an ability that should be taught strategically because it is less likely to increase naturally (Nunan, 1997). Nevertheless, Pakistani researchers have not treated the skill of listening in much detail. According to (Berman, 2003), listening strategy instruction consists of three stages: (a) pre-listening, (b) while listening, and (c) post-listening strategies. In another significant study, comprehension of verbal language, according to Vandergrift, is fundamentally an inferential process (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012), where listeners benefit from the interaction of linguistic and world information to create an image in their mind of what they perceive (Sohler, 2020). Listeners then apply these knowledge sources through a series of top-down and bottom-up processes (Flowerdew & Miller, 2006; Lynch & Mendelsohn, 2010; Rost, 2007). When using contextual and prior knowledge (content,

genre, context, and other schema knowledge held in long-term memory) to assist them in building a conceptual model for better understanding, listeners prefer top-down approaches. Simultaneously, top-down processes are enhanced by using corrective techniques (Field, 2004).

Goh (2000), who was interested in work involving less-skilled listeners, examined the real-life listening challenges faced by second language listeners in light of Anderson's (1995) three-phase model, which includes conceptual processing, parsing, and deployment (Nosratinia et al., 2015). Listeners develop a credible understanding of what they hear when these three mental processes reoccur. The listeners have reported various challenges during the perceptual processing phase: 1) difficulty in recognizing words, 2) less accurate in following the track, 3) difficulty in parsing the stream of speech, 4) forgetting the commencement of the audio text, and 5) facing distraction issues. The problems learners face during the parsing phase include 1) overhearing what came rapidly, 2) facing problems to build a mental picture from words, and 3) not grasping the following sections due to what was missed previously. During the last phase of utilization, the following listening issues were raised: 1) comprehending the words but not the underlying message, and 2) being confused by message disparities. Although almost all listeners reported similar issues, Goh (2000) found that listeners with lower-proficiency seemed to have more difficulty with word segmentation skills.

L2 listeners have to improve their word identification skills, but they need to prevent the urge to subconsciously translate the language to L1 to become competent in listening (Bloomfield et al., 2010). A bottom-up approach to listening (Osada, 2004) does not supply sufficient attention resources to focus on meaning. Beginning-level listeners may feel restricted to contextual information that facilitates comprehension (Liu, 2009), such as inference, to compensate for unknown terms if they process the available data without utilizing the top-down knowledge. Owing to the usefulness of mastering the skill of inference, explicit training in listening proves beneficial for learners to extract hidden information from the known knowledge of the text.

Most students believe that listening is the most complicated in all four essential language skills (Field, 2008; Chang et al., 2019). The common obstacles that these listeners have recorded include; concentration problems, rate of occurrence (Hasan, 2000; Lynch, 2011), failure to identify the verbal terms even they are familiar with (Goh, 2000). A few more are the lesser ability to divide the stream of speech into comprehensible parts (Goh, 2000). Listening exhaustion is caused by an inability to detect modifications or markers in speech, the length of texts (Hasan, 2000; Rost & Ross, 1991), and the usage of inappropriate listening strategies (Hasan, 2000). Mendelsohn (2001) and Siegel (2013a) proposed explicit listening strategies to address these problems. As a result, several techniques for teaching L2 listening have been

identified as essential, including listening to content, activating the framework in the pre-listening stage, and drawing conclusions and interpretations (Hinkel, 2006). These tactics could be taught to L2 listeners to compensate for what they do not even comprehend. This toolset teaches learners how to use listening skills successfully.

Listeners usually fail to make successful attempts in the focused listening situation; thus, there is always a chance that they face problems understanding what is being said (Rost, 2016). This gap makes it essential for language teachers to come up with modified teaching methods to integrate listening into their teaching and to facilitate students with opportunities for meaningful listening input, both within and outside the classroom (Bueno-Alastuey & Agullö, 2015). Experts have recommended a few techniques to help students cope with the difficulty of listening to texts, which are listed below, as cited in (Field, 2004, 2011; Wolvin & Coakley, 2000):

A pre-listening activity is a prerequisite to remind students of the listening content and vocabulary they need to activate in their schema.

Students should brainstorm words they will likely encounter in the listening text. This skill shows their level of recognition and gives them a cue for the listening task.

Guessing the words or types of words that students expect to hear may assist them well in the listening task.

Abedin et al. (2010) clarify the essence of how to effectively teach listening. According to him, learners should be encouraged to listen to multiple variations and languages instead of only their teachers' voice with its peculiarities. The learners need to know a single variety of English, but good exposure to world Englishes is also required. The second extensive explanation for teaching listening is that it makes students subconsciously learn the language even though teachers do not call their attention to the unique features of language (Azevedo1 & Buchweitz, 2015; Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). The more students listen, the better they use the language. The emphasis on listening instruction in research has lately been shifted to more successful approaches to direct the learners for "listening to learn" (Vandergrift, 2007). Nevertheless, there are just a few research studies available that focus on the influence of strategy-based teaching on listening (Chen, 2007; Graham & MacAro, 2008; Mehrak Rahimi & Katal, 2012; Rahimirad et al., 2014; Salehawati et al., 2019; Schmitt, 2010; Siegel, 2013; Vandergrift, 2004; Vandergrift & Tafaghdtari, 2010).

According to eminent researchers (Dergisi, 2018; Macaro et al., 2007; Rahimirad & Zare-Ee, 2015), explicit listening strategies are important for the efficient listening process. Explicit listening strategy instruction involves anticipating the possible answers to the questions (e.g., Goh, 2000) and listening for keywords phrases that possess units of important ideas (e.g., Malley & Chamot, 1989). It also includes

perceiving and evaluating interpretation, i.e., endorsing one's interpretation (Goh, 2000; Vandergrift, 2004); working out the meaning of new words (Goh, 2008), using a collection of clues that includes semantic, contextual, and the learner's prior knowledge (Goh, 2008; O'Malley et al., 1989; Vandergrift, 2007). Studies by (Graham & MacAro, 2008) and (Cross 2009) have depicted that using explicit listening strategy-based instruction to teach listening allows for improved listening skills of learners. (Graham & MacAro, 2008; Wolvin & Cohen, 2012) conducted a research study with 68 French students in England. The impact of explicit listening strategy instruction on the skills of listening are investigated in this study. According to the findings, strategy-based listening training significantly improves listening skills.

Cross (2009) also identified the effect of strategy-based listening instruction on the outperformance of Japanese EFL students viewing BBC news videos in Australia (Cross, 2009). All these instances show a noticeable improvement in learners' listening skills by exposure to explicit strategy instruction, thus giving direction to the current study. The listening technique using explicit listening instruction introduces learners to various listening techniques, accents, articulation, syntax, and lexicon (Dewi, 2018). The instructor must deliberately mold motives and attitudes in the classroom and create a social and academic atmosphere to expedite teaching listening (Alper & McGregor, 2015). The instructor should help improve student autonomy through clear training on listening and the use of scaffolding (Picard & Velautham, 2016; Taghizadeh & Saadatju, 2020).

The framework used for this study, proposed by (Nix, 2016), is the extant language learning strategy instruction (ELLSI). It has been disintegrated into its four components (Fig. 1) which depict the complexity of explicit listening strategy instruction and the probability of enhancing academic listening skills. It is a visual illustration of the various interconnected listening activities. For this work, the ELLSI descriptors were used to build a repertoire of strategy based knowledge with similarities and conceptual disparities. It describes the complexity of academic listening and its contribution towards improving academic listening skills using academic listening strategy instruction that subsequently formulates the focus of this study.

In this framework, the first element is the setting, which outlines the circumstances in which ESL listening might occur, eventually influencing the probability of using an appropriate teaching technique. This facet in ELLSI shows the academic context of the current study. The second facet is the channel used in this study to deliver audiovisual media instruction since the study was conducted in the Covid-19 period when physical teaching came to a halt for the set period. The third facet of this framework emphasizes explicit strategy instruction that embeds cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Lastly,

listening knowledge was disseminated using the combination of interactive, top-down, and bottom-up processing, which is the fourth facet of ELLSI.

As mentioned earlier, explicit listening strategy instruction has three levels: pre-listening, while listening, and post-listening (Berman, 2003; Nguyen & Abbott, 2016). Explaining the content and priorities of the listening activities marks the beginning point of explicit listening strategy instruction (Guan, 2014; Kaivanpanah et al., 2020; Bagheri & Karami, 2014). Explicit listening directions may reflect on particular issues such as increased stress patterns, decreased styles, and word limits that allow the listening activity to have purposeful listening practice with set objectives (Omari, 2019). English language learners benefit from explicit listening strategy instruction because it enhances academic listening skills and listeners' interaction with the context and the content of the listening input (Henry et al., 2017). Thus, this experimental study is being carried out to bridge the gap between effective listening teaching strategies and a lack of research to fulfill the needs of students' evolving language learning demands.

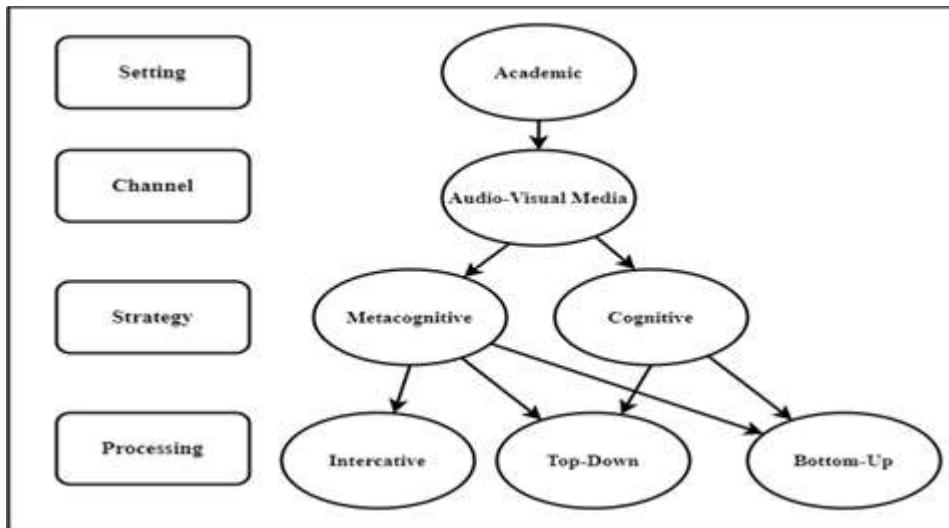


Figure 1: A theoretical framework of the extant language learning strategy

Source: Adapted from (Nix, 2016)

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. This study aims to determine the Pakistani ESL learners' knowledge of explicit listening strategy instruction and its effects on their academic listening skills.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the impact of explicit listening strategy instruction on the academic listening

skills of engineering undergraduate students in a public sector university in Karachi?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. H0: There is no significant difference in the Academic Listening Skills of participants in the pre-test and post-test through explicit listening strategy instruction.
2. H1: There is a significant difference in the Academic Listening Skills of participants in the pre-test and post-test through explicit listening strategy instruction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were selected based on convenience sampling that included an intact group of thirty-eight students with 31 (81.6%) male and 7 (18.4%) female students from a public sector university in Karachi. They completed their high school in various educational systems before qualifying for tertiary level education (see Table 1 for details). Compared to those in physical classes, the learning benchmark of online classes relies more on efficient listening. For this reason, it is critical to look into students' academic listening skills in online Academic English programs.

Table 1. Participant's Demographic Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage %
<i>Gender</i>	Male	31
	Female	7
<i>Preliminary Education</i>	Agha Khan Board	7
	Karachi Board	25
	American System Board	1
	Cambridge Board	3
	Ziauddin Board	1
	Hyderabad Board	1

Research Instruments

This study's data was collected using two instruments to measure the variables under investigation. The first was interactive lesson plans based on explicit listening strategy instruction comprised of a 6-week teaching plan in online classes, developed by the author of this research study after reviewing the literature (Goh & Taib, 2006; Hamouda, 2013; Vandergrift, 2004; Wilson, 2003; Carrier, 2003; Vandergrift, 2004).

The literature on teaching listening was analyzed, and skills of higher levels were chosen to help learners solve their academic listening complexities.

The second instrument was used to examine the pre and post-academic listening skills of students using IELTS academic listening tests taken from the website of the British Council (Scovell, Pastellas, & Knobel, 2004).

IELTS Academic Pre and Posttest

The instrument of the IELTS listening paper consisted of four sections. Each section comprises ten questions related to the audio recording and lasts for 30 minutes. In the pre-test session, the students described their strategies for dealing with listening challenges before playing the audio track. While in the post-test, students were asked to prioritize the acquired strategies to solve the questions given on the listening test. The entire IELTS listening section contains 40 questions (see Table 2). It is worth mentioning that although the two tests (pre and post) of the instrument involved the same number of questions, the set of questions selected in the post-test were different from questions of the pre-test. This change was brought on purpose to minimize the threats of internal and external validity to the study.

Table 2. Four Sections of the IELTS Academic Listening Test

Segments	Total Time	Amount of Questions
• segment 1		• 10 questions (Dialogue)
• segment 2		• 10 questions (Monologue)
• segment 3	30 minutes	• 10 questions (Lecture by a Professor)
• segment 4		• 10 questions (Discussion on academics between two to four people)

Study Design and Procedure

This research was executed during the first semester of the First academic year. Because only one group was employed, a quasi-experimental design with no comparison group was used, i.e., a Single group for pretest-posttest. The quasi-experiments are a subtype of non-experiments that aim to imitate rigorous, actual experiments in objectivity and investigational form but lack random assignment (Marsden & Torgerson, 2012; White & Sabarwal, 2014). In quasi-experimental studies, the groups are intact and are made in terms of means rather than random selection (Cohen, Manion, 2007); thus, the followed design lacks an element of randomization.

Table 3. Explicit Listening Strategy Teaching Procedure

Weeks	Instructional techniques	Purpose (Why)	Details (What)	Resources
Week 1 (40 minutes)	Pre- Intervention Stage	To collect information about respondents and to measure the listening ability of participants.	Demographic details Information about participants will be collected IELTS Pretest IELTS academic (pre-test) without any explicit instruction on how listening is done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demographic details, IELTS (pre-test) • Online Question paper (lesson 1)
Week 2 (40 minutes)	While Intervention (stage 1)	Sharing and informing definition of the academic listening, the types, and subtypes.	Pre-Listening phase Predicting/ Brainstorming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation and Handout, • Worksheet with tasks 2a and 2b.
	While Intervention (stage 2)	Discovering fallacies about listening	While Listening phase Hunting suitable answers in a worksheet (2b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation and Handouts (lesson 2)
Week 3 (40 minutes)	While Intervention (stage 3)	To activate learners' vocabulary relevant to the topic.	Post Listening phase Class discussion on primary points and most pertinent details of the listening lesson.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide for Listening, Worksheet with tasks 3a and 3b (lesson 3). • While and Post Listening Feedback. (Wilson, 2003)
Week 4 (40 minutes)	While Intervention (stage 4)	Brainstorm to reveal ideas embedded in a listening topic.	Pre-Listening phase Guide for listening, Predicting,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question paper, PowerPoint slides explanation (lesson 4)
Week 5 (40 minutes)		To train students to create mental maps to	visualizing, inferring the main idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While and Post Listening

<p>visualize when listening to the text.</p> <p>To make students compare what they have understood and explain how they arrived at the understanding .</p>	<p>While Listening phase The practice of making predictions and previewing</p> <p>Post Listening phase Reflection and goal setting</p> <p>Pre-Listening phase Guide for listening, Visualization</p> <p>While Listening phase Students check for discrepancies, make adjustments, and generate a list of the keywords.</p> <p>Post Listening phase Reflection and goal setting</p> <p>Pre-Listening phase Inference, Visualization</p> <p>While Listening phase Students crosschecked points of disagreement, rectified the errors, and made notes of the keywords during</p>	<p>Feedback. (Wilson, 2003),</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question paper (Lesson 5)
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Week 6 (40 minutes) Post Intervention stage	To see the post-intervention effects in the Academic Listening test (IELTS).	Posttest Students were tested on IELTS listening stimulus. This stimulus was taken from the British Council website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS post-test Question paper (Lesson 6)
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It was presumed that if the post-test score is significantly different from the pre-test score, then the independent variable affects the dependent variable (Marsden & Torgerson, 2012). As previously stated, the study had the objective to analyze the impact of explicit listening strategy instruction on ESL learners' academic listening skills.

Before and after the treatment, a listening test was conducted to see any changes in the participants' strategy use patterns. For this reason, the subjects were subjected to explicit listening strategies in their Academic English online classes following the completion of the pre-test. The listening instruction took 12 sessions for six weeks, as illustrated in Table 3, *Explicit Listening Strategy Teaching Procedure*.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

To investigate the participants' pre-and post-test IELTS Academic listening parts, descriptive statistics were used. An independent-sample t-test was performed to evaluate the learners' listening skills before and after the explicit listening strategy instruction in order to reach the answer of research question. The quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS version 20 while applying descriptive statistics and paired t-test.

Descriptive Statistics of IELTS Academic Pre and Post Test

The descriptive statistics of the IELTS academic listening pre and post-test (shown in Table 4) were calculated using SPSS Version 20.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Posttest (IELTS Academic Listening)

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	Coefficient of Variation
Pre-Test	38	21.45	6.11	9	38	28.49%
Posttest	38	37.29	2.62	29	40	7.02%

Table 4 indicates that intervention of ELSI made a significant difference in students' listening test performance, and their academic listening efficiency has increased in the post-test. The pre-test's SD (standard deviation) is 6.11, and for the post-test, it is 2.62. The SD value in the post-test is lower than the pre-test, which depicts those values in the post-test are more clustered together than in the pre-test. The minimum and maximum values for the pre-test are 09.00 and 38.00. For the post-test, it is 29.00 and 40.00, respectively, which shows improvement in post-test listening scores, consequently reporting the significance of the treatment through explicit listening strategy instruction and explicit exposure to IELTS academic listening tips and techniques provided sequentially during the intervention. To put it another way, the treatment appeared to have a considerable impact on the participants' results. The coefficient of variation of the pre-test score was observed at 28.49%, but it significantly decreased after intervention which is 7.024%.

Hypothesis Testing: Paired Sample T-Test

Using the paired sample t-test, the following hypothesis was tested:

H 01: There is no significant difference in the Academic Listening skills of ESL undergraduate learners before and after ELSI intervention.

Table 5. Paired Samples T-Test for Academic Listening Skills (Pre-and Post-test)

Pair	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	Correlation	T	df	Sig.
Pre-test	3	21.45	6.110			-	3	0.000
Posttest	8	37.29	2.619	-15.842	0.568	19.14	7	*

*p<.05

To examine the participant's development in Academic listening skills before and after the intervention, a paired sample t-test was used. The results of the pre-tests were different i.e., Mean=21.45, Standard Deviation = 6.110 and Posttest i.e., Mean = 37.29,

Standard Deviation = 2.619; The difference (-15.842) in means is statistically significant; $t(37) = -19.142$, $p = 0.000$ (i.e., < 0.05). The correlation between the pre and post-test scores is .568 ($p=.000$). Statistical results, as shown in Table 3, suggest that the explicit strategy instruction has a significant impact on the academic listening skills of engineering undergraduate students as their scores increased, revealing improved academic listening performance of students after the ELSI intervention. The presented data provide sufficient evidence to reject null hypotheses.

DISCUSSION

This research study demonstrated that explicit listening strategy training had a statistically significant impact on ESL undergraduate students' academic listening performance. The paired t-test indicates a significant difference in IELTS academic listening post-test, implying that the intervention was effective. The current study's findings are consistent with findings of Chamot (2021); Malley & Chamot (1989); Vandergrift, 2004; Vandergrift & Tafaghdtari (2010); Flowerdew & Miller (2006); Lynch & Mendelsohn (2010); and Rost (2007). They all emphasized the need of specific listening strategy instruction in making students to proficient in their L2 academic listening. The outcomes of this study also corroborate those of earlier research studies, including (Graham & MacAro, 2008; Liu, 2009; Zhang, D., 2009; Guan, 2014; Graham et al., 2011; Jacobsen, 2015).

Previously, the teaching of listening training was accompanied mainly by simply solving the listening questions with the help of audio track followed by presenting the correct answers by the teacher and discussing the listening transcripts (Chen, 2005; Goh, 2008; Goh & Taib, 2006; Rahimrad & Zare-Ee, 2015). The negative impact of such test-driven listening instruction is the teachers' focus solely on students' comprehension in the listening test rather than the mechanism through which students learn to understand through listening (Chen, 2007; Rahimrad, 2014). According to Chen (2005, 2007), this dependent and test-oriented listening result will discourage students from becoming successful listeners, lowering their confidence and willingness to learn how to listen. Another explanation for this finding is the time devoted to this study. A 6-week period of 12-hours of strategy teaching has turned out to be sufficient for the learners to effectively orchestrate and absorb the range of strategies critical for successful listening in an academic setting.

According to this research, task-oriented structure and the pedagogical cycle of the listening practice over six weeks may have been responsible for considerable gains in the post-test score. After adequate exposure to sequenced listening activities, the participants were given space to peer-share their level of understanding the listening questions and check their listening comprehension (i.e., monitoring); thus, they availed the opportunity of supervising their performance, which could have led to apparent

improvements in their post-test IELTS listening score.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to experiment that how explicit listening strategy instruction impacts undergraduate ESL students' academic listening skills. The findings showed that explicit listening strategy instruction had a statistically significant impact on language learners' listening skills. Hence, explicit strategy instruction could help ESL university students to improve their listening skills. According to the study findings, students had difficulty understanding academic listening matter before receiving explicit technique instruction, as reflected by their lower pre-test scores. Students also struggled to retain their focus while listening to the audio recording.

Additionally, learners lacked strategic awareness, which hampered their ability to improve their academic listening skills. The use of taught strategies helped the learners to extract information from the spoken discourse more effectively. Therefore, explicit listening strategy instruction positively impacted the learners' academic listening skills in L2, as depicted by the listening Post-test scores.

In terms of the pedagogical implications of the study, the findings imply that explicit listening skills should be taught to students. With increasing confidence, it could now be declared that ESL professionals have a crucial part in providing support to university students' academic listening skills as they face difficulties comprehending lectures, seminars, workshops. The training sessions should prepare students to be well acquainted with efficient listening skills in educational contexts, a prerequisite for adequate comprehension.

Exposing students to systematic and explicit training could prove beneficial in using specific strategies for academic listening skill enhancement. As a result, it is imperative that we, as teachers should, teach our students the explicit techniques to build a proactive approach by overcoming listening deficiencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, quantitative approaches have their strengths and weaknesses; thus, integrating study methodologies to produce considerable insight into language strategy usage would be more productive and provide a richer image of the teaching and learning process. Therefore, more research using new approaches and techniques is required to confirm these findings. Other languages, larger samples, more time, and a group of well-equipped teachers to deliver instruction utilizing an explicit listening method may well be considered in future studies. Additionally, listening assessments should be more closely connected with students' existing listening skills. Finally, explicit listening strategy instruction needs to be stretched out over a longer length of time.

Furthermore, more time should be allotted to polish academic listening skills of learners both within and beyond English language classes, emphasizing the process of listening rather than simply giving prospects to listen or directly evaluating listening assignments. Ultimately, the study concluded that teachers could change passive learners into active and independent learners by increasing students' explicit systematic strategies. The study findings include teacher development, curriculum planning, and test development ramifications.

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